AN

# ESSAY

ON

# HYPOCRISIE

AND

# Phariſaiſm.

As it was ſet forth in a SERMON
By a Curate of SOULS.

*LONDON:*
Printed by *J. C.* and *Freeman Collins*, for
*Charles Yeo* Bookſeller in *Exon.* 1683.

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To the Worshipful

**WILLIAM LACY Sen. Esq;**

One of His Majesties Deputy-Lieutenants and Justices of the Peace for the County of

# SOMERSET.

Honoured Sir,

THE *Authour of this ensuing Discourse has been importuned by divers Friends to make it publick long since. If he had done it himself, you might have expected a more formal Epistle. But it seems other Considerations or Persons have been more prevalent with him. He has notwithstanding, upon a Friends request, been so courteous as to impart a Copy of it for my own satisfaction. And truly, whatever his reasons may be against it, I am confident they cannot out-weigh the significancy of its Publication. I have therefore adventured upon his Candour, to do that Service to the World, which his Modesty, or I know not what, would not permit him: And also to Dedicate his Endeavours to*

*Your*

*Your self, not onely because you are a great friend to the Author (as of whom he often speaks with the most grateful resentments) but also because you are a known Patron of his Subject, of that Truth and Simplicity, that Ingenuity and Sincerity which he contends for.*

*If I have herein made too bold with you or him, I leave my good intention to plead for me, and beg pardon.*

J: W.

LUKE

# LUKE 12. 1.

*----First of all, beware of the Leaven of the Phariſees, which is Hypocriſie.*

AS for the Occaſion of theſe words, it aroſe upon an invitation of our Saviour to a Dinner by one of the Phariſees. Now *it was a cuſtom with the Phariſees to waſh juſt before they ſate down to meat*; which they ſtrictly obſerved as a matter of Religion. And becauſe our Saviour did not make ſo ſuperſtitious an account of it, therefore *the Phariſee marvelled that he had not waſhed before dinner.* Whereupon our Lord took occaſion to ſpeak his mind freely to the Phariſees.

He told them, that while they took ſo much care to make clean the outſide, their inward parts were full of ravening and wickedneſs. And therefore he denoûnced ſeveral woes againſt the Phariſees for being ſo over-nice and zealous about their external rites, that ſo they might *appear righteous unto men*, whileſt in the mean time they *neglected the weightier matters of the Law*, and were inwardly full of moſt dangerous reſervs, moſt wicked and abominable deſigns.

Upon this the proud Phariſees were ſorely netled, and preſently they were for revenge upon our Saviour, cap. 11. v. 53, 54. *As he ſaid theſe things unto them, the Scribes and the Phariſees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to ſpeak of many things, laying wait for him, and ſeeking to catch ſomthing out of his mouth, that they might accuſe him.* And while they were hot in diſcourſe, *in the mean time there were gathered together an innumerable company of people, inſomuch*

 *that*

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*that they trode one upon another ; and he began to ſay to his Diſciples,* ( they were neareſt to him, but ſo as all the people heard ) and what did he ſay ? why, *Firſt of all, beware of the Leaven of the Phariſees, which is hypocriſie.*

Theſe Phariſees it ſeems were a dangerous and enſnaring ſort of folk : they were men of the deepeſt diſſimulation and diſguiſe; they were right skill'd in the crafty tricks of inſinuation and ſurprizal, and had alway treacherous deſigns upon ſuch as were not of their Sect and Perſuaſion. Oh they were a viperous generation ! They deviſed all the ways they could to catch and entangle our bleſſed Saviour : but he knowing their hearts, could the better prevent and avoid them. Yet their guile being not ſo diſcernible to others, to the intent therefore that the harmleſs world might not any longer be ſo much abuſed and impoſed on by their frauds; He made it his buſineſs ever and anon to diſcover the wiles and arts of the Pharisees, and the danger of them ; and to ſtir up his Auditors with all earneſtneſs and importunity to have the mightieſt care of them that they could. As *firſt of all,* ( or chiefly and above all things ) *to beware of this Leaven, the Leaven of the Phariſees, which is Hypocriſie.*

To give this Text its due, I conceiv theſe three things ſhould be done.

1. Should be ſet forth the *nature of Hypocriſie* in general ; that we do not proceed upon a miſtaken Ground.
2. The ſpecial and eminent Hypocriſie mentiond in the Text, *the Leaven of the Phariſees* ; that we may have a diſtinct underſtanding of it.
3. The *danger of this Hypocriſie* ; that we may be the more cautious of it. I ſhall endeavour accordingly,

*Firſt,* To ſtate unto you the nature of Hypocriſie in general. And indeed much of the nature of things is many times diſcovered in their names. The word *Hypocrite* does properly ſignify a Stageplayer, one that undertakes to perſonate others in their ſpeech or habit , their action or demeanor,

meanor : and when it is uſed in religious and moral concerns ( as it is alway in the Scriptures ) it denotes a naughty perſon in the ſhape and guiſe of one that is a religious and good man.

The Heb. word חנף ſignifyes both a wicked man and a deceiver, q. d. one that is really wicked, but deceivs men by ſeeming otherwiſe. And our Saviour ſets forth the Hypocrites, *Mat.* 6. by their *giving alms*, and *praying and faſting*: by performing their religious exerciſes in the moſt eminent and conſpicuous ways ; *that they may be ſeen of men*, and deemed to be very holy perſons , when meanwhile their hearts are full of all abominations.

As to the rank and ſtation of Hypocriſie among the vices, it ſtandeth in oppoſition to the chriſtian vertue of ſimplicity and ſincerity whereof the Apoſte ſpeaks, 2. Cor. 1. 12. *For our rejoycing is this, the Teſtimony of our conſcience , that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſedom , we have had our converſation here in this world , and more abundantly toward you.* Sincerity is that vertue whereby we do honeſtly and fairly make known our minds, when it is proper to diſcover ourſelvs, to one another: and the Apoſtle had converſed ſo ingenuouſly in this reſpect, that he had great comfort in himſelf about it, and he did even rejoice to think on't. But his converſation could have bin no ſuch Cordial to him, if he had had it in *fleſhly wiſdom*; i. e. if he had craftily impoſed on the world by repreſenting things or perſons otherwiſe than indeed they were, with an evil purpoſe. *Fleſhly wiſedom* is a general term ( I take it ) whereby the Scripture intends all manner of craft and guile for the promotion of naughty ends : but when Religion or vertue is counterfeited for ſuch purpoſes, the Holy Ghoſt calls it by the more proper and ſpecial name of *Hypocriſie.*

From what hath bin ſaid of Hypocriſie in general, we may adventure theſe two Concluſions. 1. That the ſubject matter of all Hypocriſie is an endeavouring to beguile the world

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into an erroneous opinion of oneſelf. 2. That the form and faſhion of it, wherein it differs from other ſorts of fraud, is the form of Godlineſs, the ſhape and colour of Vertue and Religion. Accordingly we may define it: *Hypocriſie is an endeavouring to deceive the world into an erroneous opinion of oneſelf by ſacred pretences.* This is the account of Hypocriſie in general.

The Scripture mentions two ſorts of it. One is a deceiving men with pretences of love and friendſhip. Friendſhip and brotherly kindneſs, they are ſacred things; and when men make ſhew of theſe, and have none in their hearts, the Scripture calls it *Hypocriſie.* So we underſtand *Solomon*, when he ſaith, an *Hypocrite with his mouth deſtroyeth his neighbour.* Such was the Hypocriſie of *Joab* to *Abner*; and of *Judas* in betraying his Maſter: and S. *Paul's love without diſſimulation*, and S. *Peter's love unfeigned*, it is in the Greek ἀνυπόκριτος, *love without Hypocriſie.*

Prov. 11. 9.

Rom. 12. 9.
1. Pet. 1, 22.

But this cannot be the eminent Hypocriſie, *the Leaven of the Phariſees*, foraſmuch as this is common to all ſorts of men. Any baſe treacherous man, of whatſoever Profeſſion, Sect, or Perſuaſion, might then in our Saviour's time, and may and do ſtill, uſe this Hypocriſie. It is indeed the deſigne of all Hypocriſie, to be ſeen and approved of men, to inſinuate into and captivate the affections of the ſpectators. But this any other might do as well as the Phariſees; ſo that this is not enough to ſet forth the diſtinct and peculiar Hypocriſie of the Phariſees.

There is therefore yet another ſort of Hypocriſie ſet forth in the holy Scripture; and that is, an endeavouring to deceive others into an erroneous opinion of oneſelf, by pious and religious pretences to Godward. The form of the other was in ſhew of friendſhip and kindneſs for man: This conſiſts of like pretences of reſpect for God. They may both be diſtinguiſht into Ordinary and Extraordinary. Friendly Hypocriſie in Ordinary, is when we receive all common Civility and uſual reſpects

reſpects from men that have no kindneſs at all for us in their hearts, but do bear evil will at us. It is Extraordinary, when we meet with a multitude of fair words and endearing proteſtations, with high and mighty compliments from perſons no better diſpoſed towards us, and perhaps worſe than ordinary.

So for Religious Hypocriſie. The Ordinary ſort of it is an outward complyance with ſuch Forms and Modes of Religion as the Law requires, and are generally in uſe among the people, when all the while the heart goeth another way. This was their Hypocriſie of whom the Lord complains, *Ezec.* 33. 31, 32. *They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they ſhew much Love, but their heart goeth after their Covetouſneſs. And lo thou art unto them as a very lovely ſong of one that hath a pleaſant voice, and can play well on an inſtrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not*, q. d. they would reſort to the places of the public worſhip of God, and therein demean themſelves according to the venerable Sanctions of the times, when their hearts were quite eſtranged from it.

But neither could this be all the Hypocriſie of the *Phariſees*, foraſmuch as the *Sadduces* or any other ſort of men might be equally guilty of this Hypocriſie. Beſides, there is no ſuch danger of this Hypocriſie to others, as our Saviour implyes of the Leaven of the Phariſees by his earneſt caution in the Text. There is indeed a great deal of danger in this Hypocriſie, to thoſe perſons that are guilty of it; and they will one day be convinced of it to their utmoſt peril, if they do not *keep their hearts with all diligence*, and endeavour to ſuit them to their pretences in things of this nature. But there is no danger of ſeducing others into any inconvenience by it: Becauſe this is that which is required and expected from them, *viz.* an outward conformity in Religion. What danger is it to me to receiv common Civility from a man,

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and due reſpect according to the uſual cuſtom of the world, altho perhaps his heart does contradict it? But if he treat me with extraordinary endearment, with a burden of flattery and colloguing, which I can aſſign to no reaſonable cauſe, nor derive from any other fountain than a deſign upon me; why, every one knows this to be very ſuſpicious and dangerous. But the ordinary ſhew of reſpect and kindneſs is no more than what every one expects, and therefore no way dangerous. Now ſuch is the danger of Religious Hypocriſie. The outward complyance with the common rules and practice is every ones duty: and if any mans heart does not
Jam. 1, 22. conſent, let him ſee to it. S. *James* determines it not ſo much a deceiving *others*, as deceiving *his own ſelf*. For how ſhould it move others, if a man act as they do, and as they require? If he does not mean as he pretends, who can tell that? The humane Laws can exact only outward complyance, they cannot ſearch the heart. Becauſe therefore there is no ſuch danger of this Hypocriſie, and what ever the danger be, becauſe we cannot diſcern the hearts of men, and know how to avoid it; I conceiv this common ſort, this religious Hypocriſie in Ordinary (as I call it) is not the *Leaven of the Phariſees* which our Saviour does ſo earneſtly caution us to *beware of*.

But then there is religious Hypocriſie in Extraordinary, *i. e.* when men will not be content with thoſe forms and meaſures of Public Devotion which the Laws and practice of the Church do direct, but muſt have New Modes of their own deviſing; and take larger meaſures than are commonly uſed, that ſo they may be much obſerved, and thereby gain to themſelvs ſom ſecular advantage, or do miſchief to others. This is religious Hypocriſie in Extraordinary, *viz.* an endeavouring to deceiv others into an erroneous opinion of oneſelf, by pretending more Religion and Piety towards God in the ſight of men, than is required or uſually practiced among the major part of the Neighbourhood.

When

When men will be clearer than the Light, wiſer than the Law, more regular than the Rule, over-critical and pragmatical in Religious exerciſes; when they affect a ſingularity, pretending to tranſcendent and unuſual meaſures of Devotion, and all this for the better effecting worldly ends and purpoſes, it is the groſſeſt Hypocriſie, it is religious Hypocriſie in Extraordinary. This was the Hypocriſie of young *Abſolon*, when he pretended a religious *Vow to the Lord in Hebron*, that he might *ſteal away* and engage *the hearts of the people* from his aged and indulgent father. This was the Hypocriſie of *Jeroboam* the ſon of *Nebat*, in ſetting up ſeparate places of public worſhip at Dan and Bethel, upon pretence of eaſing the people; when the deſign of it was, for fear if they ſhould go up to do ſacrifice at Jeruſalem, their hearts ſhould return to their Lord, even to *Rehoboam* King of Judah: and this was the Hypocriſie of *Judas*, when he grudged the expence of the precious oyntment on his Maſters head, ſaying, *To what purpoſe is this waſt? for this oyntment might have bin ſold for much, and given to the poor. This he ſaid, not that he cared for the poor; but becauſe he was a thief, and had the bag*, and bare that which was put therein. And that this was alſo the Hypocriſie of the Phariſees, will appear, upon enquiry into three things concerning them. They are theſe.

1. The Being and Original of their Sect.
2. A few of their moſt remarkable Opinions.
3. Their practical Exceſſes in matters of Religion.

1. For the being and original of their Sect, what they were, and whence they did derive. And touching this, you ſhall underſtand how that anciently, before the time of the Maccabees, there were but two profeſſed differences in Religion amongſt the Jews: one of theſe Sects was called the *Karraim*; they were ſuch as adhered wholly to the written Law, and allowed only of the Scripture for the Canon of Religion. The other was called the *Aſſidim*, i. e. greater zealots in Religion than Ordinary; they admitted ſundry additions to the Law,

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and had alſo the Traditions and Gloſſes of their Fathers in equal eſteem with the written Law. Biſhop *Hall* calls them *ſupererogatory and Popiſh Jews*, men that profeſſed a ſtricter holineſs than the Law required. Out of theſe ſprang the Sect of the Phariſees, as you ſhall hear by and by.

Concerning theſe *Aſſideans*, *Scaliger* informs us that they did ſequeſter themſelvs from worldly buſineſs, and of their own free accord devoted themſelvs in an extraordinary manner to matters of Religion; that they were a ſort of Guild or Religious Corporation, concluded under certain Rules of Order and Fraternity. He ſuppoſeth them to derive from the houſe of the *Rechabites* in this manner. The *Rechabites* (ye know) of whom the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſpeaketh, they inſtituted an auſtere Order of Religion and Devotion amongſt themſelvs: but the Captivity coming upon them ſhortly after its inſtitution, the Order was diſſolved; and again upon their return, the ſons of *Jonadab* renewed their former obſervations, and without reſtriction of them to their own family, admitted whomſoever would, into their Order; and then they went under the Denomination of *Aſſideans*, i.e. holy men continually attending the ſervice of Religion. So *Scaliger* interprets *Jeremiahs* prophecy that *Jonadab ſhould not want a man to ſtand before the Lord, i. e.* to miniſter and attend holy duties, like as did *Anna* the Propheteſs. By the time of the *Maccabees* they were grown very conſiderable. Thus we read, 1 Maccab. 2. 42. *there reſorted to Mattathias a great company of the Aſſideans, even all ſuch as were voluntarily devoted to the Law.*

Joſ. Scal. elench. Trihær. Nic. Serrar. cap. 22.

As for the particular Rites and Characters of this Order, beſide their continual attendance on holy duties, the Prophet mentions only abſtinence from wine, at their firſt inſtitution. But in proceſs of time, the number of their Proſelytes increaſing, they multiplyed alſo their Religious obſervations.

And

And so it was, that while this their way of living and their Austerities were lookt upon as voluntary services, and more than men were antecedently obliged to in point of salvation; whiles it was so esteemed, there hapned no Schism or Religious faction among the people; they all lived in love and peace together; they that would be of this Order might, and they that would not might chuse, and be never a whit the lesse respected in their place; counted still as brethrens, and partakers of the same hope; tho these of the holy society were peculiarly reverenced for their self-denyal and Austerity.

But after that they collected their Observations into a body, and Canons and Injunctions were made and engrost in writing, there arose among these *Assideans* certain Dogmatists, persons that subdivided themselvs under a zealous persuasion for the necessity of their observations. They were such as preacht up the severe rules of their Order as necessary in themselvs, and obliging all men in point of salvation; which others accounted only as extraordinary Devotion, and voluntary performances. They were men it seems that were strangely captivated with the rules and practices of their Society, and mightily employed themselvs in the study of the books and Canons of their Order: But not considering the ground and design of their first institution, and belike interpreting the Scripture according to them, they came at length to conceiv and teach them as the Oracles of God, and cryed them up for the unwritten law of *Moses* received down by Tradition from their Fathers, and therefore obliging all men to observ them. Hereupon they separated themselvs from the body of the *Assideans*, and from the vulgar; and they called themselvs *Pherushim*, or *Pharisees*, i. e. *holy Separatists*. So much for the Original and Derivation of this Sect of the Pharisees; namely, that they sprang out of the Society of the *Assideans*, and separated themselves upon a mistake of the Will-worship or voluntary services of that



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Order, for neceſſary Obſervations obliging all their Nation on terms of Salvation.

2. Let us enquire a little into one or two of the moſt eminent and peculiar Opinions of theſe Phariſees. 1. The firſt and fundamental opinions of the Religion of this Sect was concerning their Traditions. Theſe Traditions they equalled with the written law, and derived from *Moſes* himſelf, pretending that as he gave them a written Law, ſo alſo he delivered many things to the Fathers in the wilderneſs only by word of mouth, to the intent that they ſhould convey them down to poſterity from generation to generation; and thoſe Traditions which were in requeſt with the Phariſees, they aſſerted to be the very ſame received from *Moſes*, and taught them with like Autority as the Scriptures; upon which account our Saviour ſaid they *taught for doctrines the Commandments of men.* Now this opinion of the Divine Autority of their Traditions was requiſite for them, in the firſt place, to warrant their Separation, and then to maintain and propagate their Sect. No perſons being able to juſtify ſuch a caſe, or willing to embrace ſuch a perſuaſion, unleſs upon pretence of Divine Autority.

Another Opinion was, that none but ſuch as were of their Sect and Perſuaſion could be ſaved. And this opinion, tho it be a very bold and uncharitable doctrine, is yet very convenient for upholding any religious Sect, becauſe it is apt to ſtartle the weaker ſort of any other Perſuaſion, and ſcare them into a complyance; beſides that it fetters their own Proſelytes: when they are upon enquiry after a better way, this thought pulls them back, and holds them to a ſtricter Devotion. They had other remarkable Opinions which ſignifyed much zeal for God, or an extraordinary intereſt in him; but really in effect had a greater awe upon the people.

3. Let us now enquire how ſuitable to their principles their practical exceſſes in Religion were, whereby our Saviour

viour does describe them as beguiling the people into an opinion of their extraordinary sanctity, when all the while it was to hide and colour their wickedness and villany, to bring about worldly ends and purposes. These are frequently here and there interspersit in the history of our Saviour, according as he had occasion to expose and censure them. But more especially we have a large Catalogue of them, *Mat.* 23. Where our Saviour observs, that they did *bind heavy burdens and grievous to be born*, i. e. they did tyrannize over the consciences of their simple Proselytes, by imposing on them most rigorous and needless observations. It is also observed by our Saviour, that they made their *prayers longer* than other men, and would *compass sea* and *land to make a Proselyte*; i e. they would leave no stone unturn'd, but put forth all their Art and Power to bring over a person to their Persuasion.

Again, they used nice and subtle distinctions about Oaths, saying, *Whosoever should swear by the Temple, it were nothing; but whosoever should swear by the gold of the Temple, it would oblige him: and whosoever should swear by the Altar, it were nothing; but swearing by the gift that was upon it, he would become bound.* Moreover, they would *pay tythe of Mint, Anniſe and Cummin*, i. e. they would be very precise and exact about the minutest things relating to the service of Religion; and they would *build the tombs of the Prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.* They did pay a mighty respect and veneration to the memory of those holy men whom their forefathers had martyred, thereby to bear the world in hand themselvs were far from approving such bloody Tragedyes. They were also superstitiously zealous about the Observation of the Sabbath; and concerning this they had I can't tell how many niceties; particularly they objected it to our Saviour, as a sin in his hungry Disciples, for *plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath-day.* And they were exceeding shy of their company, for at another time they threw it out to the Disci-



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ples as a ſin in our Saviour, for *being familiar with Publicans and ſinners.*

Moreover, they *made broad their Phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments.* The Phylacteries were narrow ſcrolls of parchment, whereon they wore inſcribed as many of the Commandments as they would contain, and bound them about their wriſts, and faſtned them to their heads, to hang down over their foreheads between their eyes. This cuſtom aroſe from a mean and vulgar underſtanding of that paſſage, *Deut.* 6. 8. where upon recital of the Commandments, that God might inſinuate into their hearts, and rivet them in their affections, that he might ſet forth how near and dear he would have the Obſervation of his Laws be unto them; he expreſſes himſelf by *Moſes* in theſe words: *Thou ſhalt bind them for a ſign upon thy hand, and they ſhall be as frontlets between thine eyes.* Which the Jews interpreted in the neareſt ſenſe to the letter, as if they were to find out an expedient to wear them in the very manner. By *the Borders of their garments*, we underſtand thoſe blew ribbands which they wore upon the fringes of their garments, as enjoyned, *Num.* 15. 39. for a remembrance of all the Commandments of the Lord, and to do them. Now both of theſe badges were worn by all the Jews in general: but that which our Saviour obſerves and cenſures in the Phariſees, was their exceſs in *making their Phylacteries broader*, and their *borders larger than the common ſize*, that ſo they might ſeem more religious than their neighbours. Beſides, they would have it known, and did boaſt, that they had *frequenter faſts* amongſt themſelvs than the reſt of the Jews had. And they were obſerved for the moſt part to be of a jejune aſpect, ſad and diſmal of countenance; and likewiſe that they were ever of a querulous diſpoſition, almoſt continually complaining of the Evils, the Vices, and Adverſities of their preſent times, in compariſon with the preceding ages; and how far more happy and Halcyon days there were in the world here-

heretofore, God knows how long ago.

One trick more of the Phariſees ought not to be forgotten; how that beſides theſe direct ways of advancing themſelvs in the repute of the credulous people, they had a notable oblique courſe, at which they were very dextrous, *viz.* by traducing and depretiating other men that ſhould any way oppoſe or rival them. And they were ſo very right at it, that Innocence itſelf could not eſcape them. Even the moſt holy and harmleſs Jeſus, notwithſtanding all the great good which he did amongſt them, and the meekneſs and gentleneſs of his Carriage, was continually vilifyed and reproached by them. Somtimes they upbraided him with the meanneſs of his birth. Sometimes, for the freedom of his converſation, they traduced him as a *Winebibber and a glutton.* For his divine power of healing and caſting out Devils, they reviled him as a *Magician.* For his moſt uſeful and obliging demeanour toward all perſons, they accuſed him of ambitious and ſeditious deſigns, as if he went to *make himſelf a King.* Nothing was great, nothing was excellent in him, but theſe folk found out ſome way or other to ſlurr it, and run him down among the ignorant and captious multitude.

By theſe their arts of raillery the Phariſees much incenſed the people againſt our Saviour, and not a little advanced themſelvs in their eſteem. For this ſucceſs with the Credulous ſort is common to all Railers: Fortiter calumniare, aliquid hærebit. *Throw dirt ſtoutly at a man, and ſome of it will ſtick upon him.* He that is firſt in his own cauſe, ſeemeth right, whatever it be: and in the caſe of raillery, the moſt are apt to think a man free from thoſe faults which he finds and runs out upon in others: it being unlikely that any one ſhould dictate a Satyr againſt himſelf. So that the reputations of the railer and the railed are like a pair of weights in the hand of an harmleſs perſon: look how much one looſeth, the other ſeems to gain it. Such advantage did the Phariſees

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make by their Arts of traducing and depretiating other men.

From what hath bin ſaid therefore concerning the Original, the Principles and Practices of the Religion of the Phariſees, it does plainly appear, that theſe Phariſees were a Sect of men who pretended to more piety and ſanctity than the reſt of their brethren the Jews; and that they took the moſt effectual courſes to make the people believ they were rather better than what they Seemed to be. But that they did not herein deal *bona fide* with the world; that they were the groſſeſt Hypocrites, the vileſt men under holy diſguiſe, *wolves in ſheeps clothing*, will ſufficiently appear, upon compariſon of their Moral actions with theſe Religious pretences, of the Subſtantials of their Religion with theſe Rituals of it; and upon ſome conſideration of what uſes they made of their doctrines, and how they improved the Advantages which by theſe means they had obtained over the minds of the people.

And for the moſt part this is already done to our hands by our bleſſed Saviour in the Goſpel; ſo that I have but little more to do than to rehearſe it to you. As firſt, what was their meaning by *binding heavy burdens* on the Conſciences of thoſe weak people that were their Proſelytes, but to buſy them at a diſtance, and to awe them from inſpecting thoſe that were the teaching and the ruling Elders of them? for they themſelvs did not trouble themſelvs with thoſe burdens; *they did not touch them ſo much as with one of their fingers*. Why did they take ſo much pains in *making Proſelytes*, but that when they were made, they might manage them as they pleaſed, to the moſt vile and pernicious purpoſes? For *they made them twofold more the children of Hell than themſelvs*. Why did they ſo gravely and demurely diſtinguiſh about *Oaths*, but to gain the eſteem of mighty learned and critical Doctors, and ableſt diſpenſers of the myſteries of Religion, and to render Oaths uſeleſs as they ſaw occaſion?

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Even about the moſt ſacred and venerable things that ever were in the whole world, to oblige mankind one to another, theſe men could quibble and equivocate, to make them inſignificant. So that when they had a mind to it, nothing ſhould be able, not the moſt ſolemn Oaths imaginable, to hold them to their duty.

Why did they make their *prayers ſo long*, and chuſe *ſuch places* for uttering them, where *they might be ſeen or heard of men*, but that amuſing people with the noiſe of their Devotion, they might the more ſolemnly and ſafely do what unrighteouſneſs they pleaſed, even *devour widows houſes*? Why did they pretend ſo much reſpect and veneration for the *Martyrs which their Fathers had* made, but that they might amuſe the world until an Opportunity ſhould ſerve them to do the like and greater Villanyes? Indeed the Phariſees did talk much to this purpoſe: *If we had lived in thoſe deſperate times wherein our Fathers perſecuted and deſtroyed ſo many good men, we would never have conſented to their inhumane and barbarous uſages, we would never have bin partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets.* Far be it from us to have any ſuch cruel and unſociable deſigns: can you think any ſuch thing of us? The Lord forbid we ſhould ever intend any thing but in order to the glory of God, and the ſalvation of mens precious ſouls! But what did our Saviour reply to this grave pretence? *Mat.* 23. 31. *Ye be witneſſes againſt yourſelvs, for that ye are the Children of thoſe very men that killed the Prophets*: i. e. ye eſpouſe the ſame intereſt and principles upon which your Fathers dealt ſo wickedly: *Fill ye up then the meaſure of your Fathers.* Why were they ſo exact in the minuteſt matters of *Tythe*, and ſo nice about the *Sabbath*, and ſo ſhy of their company, but that by *ſtraining at gnats* before folks, they might the better *ſwallow Camels* in ſecret? that by being ſo demure and critical upon the Stage, they might with leſs ſuſpicion ſpeak and act what they pleaſed behind the Curtain? as if all their Religion conſiſted

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in abſtaining not from the evil it ſelf, but only from the ſcandal and appearance of it. So much our Saviour teſtifyes againſt them; for that while they were ſo over-nice and formal about their *little things*, they omitted the *weighty matters of the Law*, viz. *mercy, judgment, and faith.* They were unmerciful, unjuſt, and ſo unfaithful, one could not truſt them. In a word, our Saviour tells us, what they did, they did all *to be ſeen of men*, for the ſake of ſome ſecular advantage. Upon this account they made their *Prayers longer*, and their *Phylacteries broader*, and their *Borders larger*, and their *Faſtings oftner*, and their exclamations upon the evils of their times louder than other men. So that altho the *Phariſees* ſeemed to be the moſt religious ſort of men, yet was it altogether upon worldly deſign, for the ſake of *filthy lucre*, and to make *gain of Godlineſs*; they were the groſſeſt Hypocrites all the while. Upon the whole therefore I may fairly conclude, that their Hypocriſie lay in this; namely, in beguiling the people into an erroneous opinion of their extraordinary ſanctity, by pretending to be more religious than the Law required, or was uſual among other men. This is that ſpecial Hypocriſie of the *Phariſees* againſt which our Saviour does ſo earneſtly caution us in the Text, as *firſt of all* (or above all things) *to beware of it*: thereby intimating that it is exceeding dangerous; which is the

3. And laſt thing propounded to be ſpoken of, *viz.* to repreſent the danger of this Hypocriſie of Phariſaiſm, that we may be the more cautious of it. Now, beloved, every Caution does imply a twofold danger; *viz.* a danger *in* the thing, and a danger *of* the thing. There is danger in the thing if it ſhould prevail, and there is danger of the thing but it may and will prevail, if we take not the greater care. Such a twofold danger attends Phariſaiſm, which way ſoever it does affect us and prevail upon us. Now it may prevail two ways; either upon our Corruption, or our Weakneſs. It may work ſo upon our Corruption, as to tempt our hearts

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to the ſame Hypocriſie, and make Phariſees of us alſo: or elſe it may prevail ſo much upon our weakneſs, as to captivate our affections, and ſubjugate our minds to the impoſture and empire of it.

1. *Firſt*, it may ſo work upon our Corruption, as to infect us with the ſame Leaven, and tempt us to uſe the ſame guile; to hide ourſelvs behind the Venerable curtain, and become deceivers of men under the grave diſguiſe of extraordinary Sanctity and Devotion: and then the danger that is in it, is the danger of Hell-fire. Nay, our Saviour does inſtance the Hypocrites as a ſort of ſinners that ſhall have the ſharpeſt and fierceſt damnation; when he would ſet forth the great ſeverity of the Lord towards the naughty ſervant, he expreſſeth it thus, *Mat.* 24. 51. *He ſhall cut him in ſunder, and appoint him his portion with Hypocrites*: ſo that the puniſhment of Hypocrites ſeems to be made the meaſure and ſtandard of the exacteſt puniſhment. And if there be any degrees in the Vengeance of God; if there be a ſeverer torture in *Hell* than other; if there be a lower place in that pit, a greater Damnation: all this, even the worſt that may be, is to be the portion of Hypocrites, the moſt wicked diſſemblers with God, and the baſeſt deceivers of mankind. This is the danger that is in it, if we ſhould let go our Integrity, and turn Hypocrites of the Phariſaical ſtrain; which God forbid.

2. There is alſo great danger of it, but it may have this effect upon ſome men: and the danger of this malignant influence of *Phariſaiſm* is, when it rules in conjunction with temptations and advantages of this preſent world; then indeed meeting with a corrupt heart, with an heart exerciſed in Covetous deſigns, what will not ſuch a heart undertake, to gain the world? But eſpecially thoſe arts and methods whereby men may make themſelvs moſt effectually, and with leaſt ſuſpicion; whereby they may uſe the world as they will themſelvs almoſt, and ſtill ſeem as if they uſed it not, they are like to be moſt acceptable to, and prevalent with the

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ſubtle genius of Ambition and Covetouſneſs, becauſe they are ſafeſt.

The violent, open, and ſcandalous ways of gaining the world, make a great deal of noiſe, and awaken all men into Conſideration and warineſs, and provoke them to ſtand upon their guard againſt us. Nay, even the honeſteſt way of gain, if eminently proſperous, creates much envy and Oppoſition. But the more private and reſerved, the more ſly and ſilent the trade is, the more apt is it to lay aſleep the Caution and Animoſity and Adverſity of the world, and does the buſineſs with greater ſecurity and ſucceſs. But eſpecially the counterfeiting of Religion will do the feat above all other Arts. Religion is that which all mankind do revere, and bear an aweful diſtance to, and deeeply confide in: and they cannot tell but the pretenders of it are ſincere; they cannot look into their hearts. Therefore under this diſguiſe there is the leaſt danger of eſpyal. They may purſue the world as eagerly as may be, and ſtill be thought to ſeek Heaven altogether. Who dares to pry into ſuch formal Saints? Upon which account S. *Peter* forewarns the Chriſtians of *falſe teachers that ſhould come among them, and privily bring in damnable Hereſyes, and many ſhould follow their pernicious ways, by reaſon of whom the way of truth ſhould be evil ſpoken of, and through covetouſneſs ſhould they with feigned words make merchandize of them.* This is the danger of Phariſaiſm, to make men turn Hypocrites, and at ſome times more than others, according as the Wind and tyde of the world ſhall favour it. Religion, at leaſt the formal part of it, being capable of ſo much abuſe, as to be made a ſtalking-horſe, to approach and ſurprize, and make ſure of the game of the world unto themſelvs.

2. If *Phariſaiſm* doth not ſo prevail, as it is unlikely it ever ſhould at the firſt onſet to poſſeſs the hearts of thoſe that are nurtured in the habits of grace, and in the fear of God; yet it may prevail upon their weakneſs: it may captivate their affections, and ſteal away their hearts into an admiration of,

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and a ſubmiſſion to the doctrines and impoſtures of it. This eaſineſs and Levity S. *Paul* chargeth upon two excellent men S. *Peter* and S. *Barnabas*, *Gal.* 2. 12, 13. *Peter* withdrew and ſeparated himſelf, being awed by them that were of the Circumciſion; and the other Jews *diſſembled with him likewiſe inſomuch that Barnabas alſo was carried away with a their Hypocriſie.* And where Phariſaiſm does ſo prevail, the danger that is in it is an entangling the ſouls of its Proſelytes in the ſnare of the Devil, as our Saviour teſtifyes againſt the *Phariſees : Ye compaſs ſea and land to make a Proſelyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of Hell than yourſelvs.* And that there is this danger in Phariſaiſm, appears by two notable effects whereunto it ſeems to bend all its force; namely, to diſtract the Proſelytes minds, and to render them of a furious and fanatical ſprit.

First, Phariſaiſm is apt to diſtract the minds of the poor Proſelytes over whoſe affections it hath once ſet up its Empire. A multitude of niceties muſt needs perplex the finite heads of mortal men to obſerv, in any buſineſs whatſoever: But eſpecially in matters of the higheſt concernment, wherein every the leaſt deviation or omiſſion ſhall be lookt upon as ſin, and that ſin under the hazard of ſalvation. Adde hereunto the myſteriouſneſs of ſuch formalities; when nothing can be done in Religion but it muſt have a ſpiritual meaning in it; ſomewhat beyond the common underſtanding and inrention of it, which no man is able to fathom, or give any account of; and methinks, it ſhould be very perplexing even to men of ſtrong minds and ſound ſpirits. Beſides, Phariſaiſm is alſo boundleſs in meaſure. Tho a man had a vaſt number of little nice and myſterious things upon his head, yet if the uſe and obſervation of them had certain ſtages and fixed periods, there were ſome comfort; the man might know were to find himſelf. But when matters of duty, the practical matters of Religion, beſides the great number and nicety of the things, are not only made very myſterious and

intricate in their nature, but alſo indefinite and unlimited in meaſure, that a man can have no certainty of his condition, nor know where or how he is, nor whither he muſt, nor the end of his labour; why this muſt needs be very amazing, and the ready rode to diſtraction and deſperation.

Now ſuch was the Religion of the Phariſees; They had their formalities without number, and very myſterious they were; every thing had a further ſublime meaning; and unbounded alſo in the practice. And tho the great ones knew well enough how to excuſe themſelvs, yet ſtill they impoſed them on their weak Proſelytes on pain of Hell-fire. They would ever and anon be calling upon them and ſtirring them up to the ſtrict Obſervation of their things. They could often object to them that they were not ſo frequent, or not ſo fervent, or not ſo long in their prayers as they might be; that their Phylacteries were not ſo broad, but they might carry more Commandments written about them if they would: that their faſtings were not ſo often nor ſo humbling, with ſuch like negative and indefinite cenſures and intimations. And if they ſhould any of them commit a fault, or omit ſome punctilio, or not beſo demure and zealous as they preſcribed, they could mightily exclaim upon the ſin of it, and tell them they could never enough expiate their negligence and backwardneſs in Gods Covenant; and they would never have done with it. Such delinquencies they would keep upon record, to throw them in the teeth with upon all occaſions; that ſothey might amuſe and damp their ſpirits, and ſhackle their minds, and hold them in durance to the moſt intenſe obſervance of their ſuperſtitions.

And this is alway the courſe of Religious Hypocriſie in Extraordinary. It is no more than what men muſt expect from it, where it does domineer, as the genuine operation of it. For that they may do it, that they may be thus imperious and tyrannical over the Conſciences of their weak Proſelytes, both as to the *quantum* of their Impoſitions, to enjoyn as much;

much ; and alſo to their quality, to make them as myſterious and unintelligible as they pleaſe, is plain from the very nature and conſtitution of ſuch a Religion ; becauſe it hath no certain rules or meaſures, but is purely an arbitrary Religion, according to the Art and humour of thoſe that manage it. For when men ſhall take it upon them to tranſcend the degrees of public Devotion and religious exerciſe which the Law and practice of the Church does direct and determine, and ſhall accordingly teach others already prepared and wiſely reſolved to be led by them, they may advance as high as they pleaſe ; and where they will ſtop who can divine ? There are no fixed limits beyond theſe lines ; no bounds to ſuch pious extravagancies.

And that they will go as high as they can, is not to be doubted. For the grand deſign of ſuch men being to maintain themſelvs in the public faith and eſteem for the greateſt zealots and Devoto's to Religion, it is their intereſt to hold up their profeſſion to the ſtrongeſt bent they are able ; to blind and burden their Proſelytes as much as may be, and to ſcrew up their minds as high as they are capable. Becauſe theſe are they that communicate their formal ſanctity ; they are the Trumpeters of their fame, and cry up their extraordinary holineſs and devotion to the world. Accordingly this ſort of men have ever bin cautious of explaining themſelvs, but have choſen for the moſt part to deliver their minds in dark ſayings, in obſcure and myſtical, negative and indefinite Expreſſions ; as if they ſtudyed more how to allure and confound, rather than inform the underſtandings of men ; whereby they might keep their Proſelytes always in the clouds, and upon the higheſt flight of contemplation. And that this is the directeſt rode to diſtraction, needs little more to demonſtrate. For when the mind of man is held up to the ſtraiteſt bent, invited onwards with a conceit of Heaven before him, and puſhed with the fears of Hell behind him, he knows not whither, nor how far, but is continually puzled

puzled with a fearful ſuſpenſe concerning the Iſſues of his own Eternity; this muſt needs very much perplex and weaken, if not quite diſtract the man, and break his ſpirit, and plunge him into deſpair. And becauſe the Phariſees of old did thus keep their Proſelytes continually under the Hatches of a blind Devotion and melancholy, therefore there abounded among them ſo may ſullen, and peeviſh, and lunatick perſons; ſo many proud, and furious, and fanatical ſpirits.

2. This is that other effect whereby does appear the danger that is in Phariſaiſm, as to entangling mens ſouls in the ſnare of the Devil; *viz.* becauſe it does directly tend to render them of a furious and fanatical ſpirit. And accordingly the Aſſembly of Divines, with M. *Diodate*, do interpret the fore-mentioned Scripture, which ſaith that *the Phariſees made a Proſelyte twofold more the Child of hell than themſelvs*, viz. that they made him more fiery and bitter againſt the Preachers, and the preaching of the Goſpel, than themſelvs were. And this is a very likely effect of Phariſaiſm: For when men are poſſeſſed with a paſſionate admiration and ungovernable affection for any profeſſion of Religion whatſoever, as they think they can never do enough nor better than to promote it, ſo they are alſo commonly perſuaded, it is moſt conducible to this great purpoſe, to vilify and miſchief whatſoever ſtands in competition with it. Every one would do ſomething in behalf of his Religion, to defend and propagate his faith; and thoſe that can do nothing by force of argument, will therefore exert their zeal in noiſe and clamour, endeavouring to make up in ſpite and miſchief to their Adverſaries, what they want in wiſedom. Such is the influence which a falſe Religion, or a miſunderſtanding of the true Religion, hath upon the ſpirits of weak men that are paſſionately devoted to it.

But eſpecially Phariſaiſm drives this way. Such a Religion as appropriates all divine favours to its own profeſſors, and repro-

reprobates all others with the utmoſt wrath and Vengeance, and thereby ſwells and inflames the hearts of its zealous Proſelytes with pride and conceit of themſelvs, with hatred and contempt of others ; that whets up the angry powers of their minds, and ſets a continual edge upon them. Such a Religion alſo as tends to perplex and diſtract the underſtandings of its Proſelytes with the myſterious and boundleſs opinions and practices which it does hold forth and impoſe, ſeems to take the neareſt courſe to fanaticiſm ; becauſe it does (ſo much as in it lyeth, to) diſquiet their judgments, and imbitter their ſpirits. It labours to drive out the good ſpirit, and to infuſe an evil Spirit. So that if men were not naturally before of a peeviſh and melancholy conſtitution, the imbibing ſuch a Religion were a likely Alterative for the purpoſe, and to render them unſociable with any but ſuch as are of the ſame humour and perſuaſion.

Being thus diſpoſed, it cannot be expected but that they ſhould treat ſuch as any way oppoſe them, in the moſt fiery and invective manner ; and rather than want, make occaſion to fall out with them, if it be for nothing elſe but to give vent to their ſwelling paſſions and bewildred underſtandings. And the more furious yet will they be, if their Religion does any way countenance the undertaking. And this Phariſaiſm does in an eſpecial manner. For it holds forth ſuch a neceſſity of its extraordinary Devotion, that none can be ſaved without their beſt obſervance of it, and then by conſequence teaches it to be the duty of all its profeſſours to endeavour by all means the proſelyting other men to their Religion, rather than let them periſh : Yet takes no care to determine a certain method for the work, but leaves the execution of ſo pious a pretence to the conſtruction of the zealous undertaker, according to his uncertain genius, and favorable occaſions. So that whatſoever miſchief they do in their religious fits, there is a *ſalvo* for all in the ſacred deſign of converting a ſinner, and ſaving his ſoul in the day of the Lord.

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And where there is ſuch a conjunction of peeviſh, angry, and zealous ſpirits, with the pretence of Religious neceſſity, it hath the moſt malevolent aſpect of all; there being none more miſchievous, more furious and unaccountable in their carriage and proceedings, than ſuch creatures inform'd and actuated by a pretended ſpirit of Religion: and if they be in a powerful ſphere, there is no ſtanding before them. Accordingly *S. Paul* doth characterize himſelf while he was a Phariſee, and lived after the ſtricteſt Sect of the Jewiſh Religion, a Phariſee, that *he perſecuted the way of Chriſt even to the death; that out of a zeal for God he became a blaſphemer, a perſecutour, and injurious.* Whereby he plainly ſheweth the ſpirit of Phariſaiſm to be a furious and fanatical ſpirit: that the Proſelytes, the weaker ſort of the Phariſees, being hurried on with blind zeal, were more fierce and eager againſt the ſincerity and preaching of the Goſpel, than the teaching and ruling part of them were, tho they ſet them on. No, theſe were taken up in conſulting and projecting matters of ſcandal againſt our Saviour and his proceedings: But the rude, and moſt odious, and barbarous part, they committed moſtly to the raſh multitude to act, whom by their devices they had ſo incenſed, that it is not to be expreſſed how fiery and fanatical they behaved themſelvs againſt him. This is the danger that is in Phariſaiſm when it prevails upon the weakneſs of many zealous men, and captivates their affections into an admiration of, and a ſubmiſſion to the doctrines and impoſtures of it, *viz.* that it is apt to entangle their ſouls in the ſnare of the Devil, by tending to diſtract their minds, and render them of a furious and fanatical ſpirit. And in all likelihood, if they eſcape being thus enſnared, Phariſaiſm may corrupt them, and tempt them to turn Factours of the ſame Hypocriſie, upon worldly Conſiderations. If their conſtitutions be too averſe to comply with the ſtricteſt intention of the mind upon the ſad and melancholy obſervations of ſuch a Religion, and their underſtandings by degrees do

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open in the communion of it, that they discern the Arts and wiles of it; and how to improve them to their worldly Advantage; why then many of them may be tempted to turn Hypocrites, and after a while they have lived in the trade, rather than accuse themselvs of having bin sometime in so gross an errour by deserting, they will chuse to adhere to so worldly advantageous a Profession. And it's great odds but their outward carriage will in some measure intimate which way Pharisaism hath prevailed with them, and entangled their souls in the snare of the Devil; *i. e.* whether by worldly considerations it hath made *Pharisees, Hypocrites* of them; or else only captivated their affections into perfect subjection and Vassalage to the impostures of it. But yet,

2. I am to set forth the danger of Pharisaism in this respect, *viz.* of Captivating the affections. And truely there is a great deal of danger of it this way, as may be seen in two eminent properties of Pharisaism. *Viz.* Its rarity and novelty, and the seeming usefulness and pretended benefit of it to mankind.

1. We may discern the danger of its prevailing this way, by its Rarity and Novelty. Sirs, it was not onely once the famous disposition of the Athenians, that *they loved to hear or to tell some new thing*, but it is indeed in some measure the common disease of mankind, to admire and flock about any thing that is new and rare, that is beside the common course of nature, or the usual practice of the world. Any thing that is extraordinary and unusal, is generally much observed. A Comet or blazing star is more gazed on than the Sun, though this be the far more glorious & beneficial Creature. A Mountebank shall have far more resort than the ablest Physitian. Even so it fareth about the most sacred and venerable things that be. He that makes most show, shall be most taken notice and talkt of. He that will eminently exceed what the Laws do direct in the external exercises of Religion,

and pretend more than the reſt of his Neighbours uſually do, why He is the man. Novelty and rarity are attractive of obſervance and admiration.

2. By the ſeeming uſefulneſs and benefit of it. If Novelty be in conjunction with a ſeeming benefit, then it never fails of a conſiderable effect. It is not enough to gain the popular vogue, that a thing be rare. The people do equally admire things for their extraordinary deformity, as for their beauty and comelineſs. But then they love, and embrace, and honour, and extol only thoſe things that ſeem to them to be excellent, and promiſe great uſe and benefit. Touching publick exerciſe of Religion; let a man keep even with the common rule of the Law, and there are no remarques upon him at all; becauſe he does no more than what is expected of him, and is uſual with the reſt of his Neighbours: but let him fall down to his prayers in the ſtreet or market-place, or any way eminently exceed the generall practice, and he ſhall be mightily admired and extol'd for a grat *Devoto*, for a moſt Religious and Godly man, and many will run after him. For people think they can never enough admire and praiſe and imitate thoſe things that are rare, and ſeem to be excellent, and of great uſe and benefit. Now theſe exceſſes plainly pretend to excellence, becauſe they outdo the common practice in the beſt matter, in the higheſt affair; and they promiſe likewiſe the greateſt benefit to mankind, even their eternal concernment, the good and welfare of ſouls: and therefore this Hypocriſie is very apt to ſteal away the hearts of the people, to ſubjugate their affections to the impoſtures of it: I mean thoſe many people that have not the ſagacity to ſmell out the leaven of it. Our Saviour does very aptly liken it to Leaven. For as Leaven is of a very ſpreading and infectious nature, (*a little Leaven leaveneth the whole lump*) ſo it is a great deal of miſchief which this Hypocriſie works upon the body of the people; a little of it will go a great way, and incredibly prevail upon the affections of mankind.

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The Phariſees of old did herewith prevail ſo far upon the hearts of the common people of the Jews, that they drew the whole multitude after them, and in proceſs of time could make uſe of them to bring about the greateſt villanyes that ever were acted under the Sun. Witneſs the great cry that was made againſt our Saviour to take away his life, notwithſtanding all that *Pilate* himſelf could ſay in his behalf.

And to inſtance the prevalence of their Hypocriſie a little higher yet; it is to be noted, that our Saviour made it his buſineſs, and took a great deal of pains in his time to diſcover the Hypocriſie of the Phariſees unto the people, and to ſet it forth plainly and convincingly before them: yet ſuch was their Credulity and fondneſs of their myſterious rarities, that at the laſt he had ſmall thank of them for it. They were carried away ſo much with this Religious diſſimulation, that for all the good he did amongſt them, they abated nothing in their clamour againſt him at his tryal. Upon which account I am alſo apt to think, that our Saviour denounced ſo many bitter woes againſt the Phariſees rather than the *Sadduces*; namely, becauſe although the *Sadduces* denyed Angels and Spirits, and all future being, which the Phariſees confeſſed; yet they were not ſo enſnaring and dangerous to the people, as the Phariſees were.

And now that I have endeavoured to clear up the nature of Hypocriſie in general, as alſo to ſettle a right and diſtinct notion of the great Hypocriſie of the Phariſees, and in ſome meaſure to repreſent the danger of this Hypocriſie; I ſhall endeavour ſome improvement of what hath bin ſaid. Several uſeful things might be gathered from it. I ſhall conclude what I have to ſay, under three common Heads. *Viz.* Inſtruction, Direction, and Exhortation.

1. Hence we may gather matter of Inſtruction. We may learn if there be any ſuch thing as Phariſaiſm now amongſt us; if there be any Chriſtians guilty of it. It is but to know this. If, for the ſake of worldly advantage there be

any endeavouring to deceive the world, by men that profess Christianity, into an opinion of their extraordinary sanctity, by pretending to more Religion than is required or usually practised. I know indeed that those Pharisees by name are dead and gone, and scarce any of that family do survive among the Jews themselves; But I am afraid you will find the thing, the *Leaven of the Pharisees* yet remaining in the world; doctrines and practices of the same nature and design taken up by men that pass under other Denominations. Wheresoever you meet with such extraordinary pretences of zeal to Godward, on purpose to draw people after the Professours of it, and to hide their base worldly designs, it is Pharisaism: and they are such persons, as like as may be, of whom our Saviour prescribes so strict caution.

In all likelikood this might be improved against the pious frauds of some religious Orders among the Papists. But I say in general, whatsoever persons we find of such extraordinary form of Godliness, and void of the power of it; where-ever we meet with men who in the sight and notice of the world make exceeding pretences for the honour of God and the service of Religion, and yet carry on wicked designs, and strengthen them thereby, we may conclude their religious zeal to be Pharisaism, and the pretenders great impostors.

But then it may be a pertinent Question; That in regard we cannot discern the hearts of men, in case therefore we should meet with such men as are religious above measure, and in all appearance as godly and venerable persons as any in the whole world again; and yet all this should be but a show, and they remain the most treacherous and deceitful men alive, as the Pharisees of old; in such case how shall we avoid the snares of their Hypocrisie? Why truely, Sirs, it were a hard case, if after all that our Saviour hath said of this Hypocrisie, and so much as he hath enjoined us to beware of, and to shun the wiles of it, there were no certain rule for avoiding it. Our Saviour was never wont to charge

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men with Impoſſibilities. There muſt therefore needs be a way whereby (although we cannot diſcern mens hearts, and conclude them Hypocrites, yet) to eſcape their ſnares if they ſhould prove ſuch. And that is a

2. Uſe of the fore-going diſcourſe, *viz.* to direct us how to avoid the wiles and danger of Phariſaiſm; and that is by giving no heed to ſuch extravagant pretences for the honour of God and Religion. For if this Hypocriſie does conſiſt of pretences to more Religion than the known laws and practices of the Church do direct; why then the propereſt, moſt ready and natural courſe to avoid the danger of it, muſt be to take no notice of ſuch pretences. The great danger of this Hypocriſie lyeth in its aptneſs to betray and carry away our affections with its diſſimulation: therefore the only way that I know for men (conſidered in their private capacity) to fruſtrate the deſign of it, is to neglect it, and not to be all concern'd at it.

But then it is very likely we may be importuned with this Objection: What? can you be too Religious? can you ſerv God too much? This Objection the Phariſees of old might make great uſe of as they ſaw occaſion. If any one ſhould gainſay them, or not readily comply with their rigorous and demure Impoſtures, they could preſently hit him in the teeth with this objection, and ſtop his mouth, What? can you ſerv God too much? This is enough to aſtoniſh a plain humble ſoul, and confound him ſo, that the poor man ſhall not have a word to ſay for himſelf: and indeed this is the main weapon of ſuch Hypocriſie. But yet it is nothing ſo formidable as it glitters.

It is eaſily evaded, by diſtinguiſhing the ſubject matter of Gods ſervice, and explaining the meaning of it. The ſervice of God is an ambiguous term, and may be underſtood in two reſpects: as

Firſt, we may worthily be ſaid to ſerv God by all manner of good living, and to glorify the Father by good works.

And

And if by serving God they understand the internal and substantial matters of Religion, abounding in all the habits of grace and vertue; if they understand the loving God and righteousness entirely, and hating iniquity and all the extermes of sin and Vanity: In this respect we cannot be too religious. So far should we be from thinking ourselvs capable of serving God too much in this real and substantial way, that our holy Master hath taught us the modesty, *after all we have done to conclude ourselvs but unprofitable servants.*

But if they take the service of God in the most vulgar sense and acceptation of it, *viz.* as signifying the external exercises of Religious Worship and Veneration; I humbly conceiv we may do too much. If by the length and fashion, and frequency of Prayer and praise, of hearing and reading of the Word, of Religious speech and gesture and demeanour towards God; if by these and such like expressions of Devotion, they mean the service of God; a man may do so much, as to make all stark naught. One cannot love his Prince, his friend and benefactor too well in his heart: but yet he may address himself with so much flattery, and fawning, and complement, and Impertinence, in such a fond and fulsom manner, as to render himself vain and ridiculous to all those that shall prudently observ him, and nauseous to that particular person with whom he would so fain endear himself. Even so I doubt not but a man may be childish and vain, and grosly excessive in Applications to his God; and if it be not from his heart, will render his sacrifice the more odious.

Otherwise why does our Saviour take such particular care about the *outward shew and expression* of our Devotion? why does he charge us to be *observed of men as little as may be* in our almsgiving, praying and fasting? & in particular, why does he *forbid us to use many vain repetitions in our prayers*, if the affections of nature were not prone to absurdities in these religious exercises? Besides, why does God himself so often upbraid

upbraid his own people the Jews with the *multitude of their sacrifices*, and tell them these were not the things he so much lookt after; and seldom or never complains for the want of them? Nay, observ it when you will, you shall find that God is cautious of cherishing every plausible pretence of this nature; and his holy Spirit in the Scriptures is more carefull to fence in, than to minister fuel to these flames, although they be sacred. So that it seemeth to be a great mistake, to think that we cannot over-do these duties, that we cannot do too much in this kind of serving God. It were good for us to be convinced of this, that so we may never be cozened into any great inconvenience by such pretences. For Pharisaical Hypocrisie doth subsist altogether by them; and the world is full enough of dear-bought experience from all sorts of Religions, how that the chief pretenders to serve God in this kind and degree, have bin found to serv themselvs most, and to the extreme disadvantage of those that confided in them. Witness the *Munster*-Anabaptists amongst the Christians; *Barchochebas* and others amongst the Jews; and even among the Mahometans, *Burgluzes* and *Bedredin* in the reign of *Mahomet* the first; and the rise of the present house of *Morocco* to the Empire.

But then it may be question'd, Are all they Hypocrites who in their religious demeanour before men shall thus exceed the common rules and practice of the Church? God forbid any man should say or think so. Doubtless a multitude of such persons mean as well as 'tis possible, and think they do their best in so doing. There must be a great many weak and credulous people, or there could not be so many deceivers. Wherefore I cannot persuade myself that all the Pharisees of old were Hypocrites, tho the chief among them were egregious ones; nor that all those that profess Christianity now adays in such excesses are so. All that I say is this: Where-ever we meet with men that profess more Religion than is suitable with humane frailty, with our State

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and conſtitution in the world; though it be not good to deſpiſe ſuch a profeſſion becauſe it may be true, yet it cannot be ſafe to truſt it, for fear it prove falſe. Such extravagant pretences alway proceed either from weakneſs or deſign; they are the product of fondneſs and Superſtition, or elſe they are managed by craft and worldly wiſdom. If no guile appear, it will be proper for Chriſtians to interpret them in the moſt favorable ſenſe; to impute them to weakneſs of mind, and undue fear of God: But the ſafeſt way to avoid the danger of them, if they ſhould derive from the other fountain, is to neglect them, and take no notice of them.

If I ſee a man praying in the ſtreet or market-place as the Phariſees did, or be any way eminently ſingular in his Religion, and behave himſelf with more ſeeming Devotion than is uſual; Why, I cannot read the mans heart, he may be as honeſt a ſoul as any breathing. But I muſt in charity impute the irregularity of his zeal to his weakneſs; and if any thing be fit to be ſaid to him in ſuch a taking, I hold nothing better than the Advice of our Saviour, *Mat. 6. 5, 6. When thou prayeſt, thou ſhalt not be as the Hypocrites, for they love to pray ſtanding in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the ſtreets, that they may be ſeen of men. But thou, when thou prayeſt, enter into thy cloſet, and ſhut thy door, and pray to thy Father which is in ſecret.* Alas poor man! thou meaneſt very well belike; but ſuch a way is improper for the buſineſs of Devotion: thou doſt exert thyſelf amiſs. Juſt ſo, man, the Hypocrites, the Phariſees do. Therefore prithee good man away into thy chamber, retire out of the ſight and hearing of men, and Cloyſter thyſelf up, that thou mayſt not diſturb the world by ſeducing people from their own buſineſs to attend and gaze after thee.

In plain, Sirs, we muſt have ſome rule for every public action, and what we ought to do before men; eſpecially for our Devotion, elſe we ſhall be at a great loſs: and there can be no other certain and adequate rule for it, but the

Laws

Laws of ſpiritual communion. If men will not be concluded by ſuch Rules, they go the way to ſet up an arbitrary and uncertain Religion. You have heard of an Arbitrary Government; what a grievance it would be for a people to be govern'd altogether by the fickle humours of men, without ſetled and known Laws; ſo that that which to day is right, to morrow may be wrong, and they cannot know when they are ſafe in any action. Such a doubtful thing were Religion, if managed only according to the variable genius of frail men, without fixed and known Rules. It cannot be very comfortable to any wiſe and conſidering men, to be of ſuch a Religion, to the Community whereof they cannot tell how to approve themſelvs, and eſcape the dangerous cenſures of it. Wherefore there is mighty reaſon we ſhould beware of this Hypocriſie: and the ſureſt way to avoid the ſnares of it, is firmly to adhere unto, and judge theſe matters of outward and viſible religion by the common rule of the Law.

3. And laſtly, here is matter of Exhortation. The foregoing diſcourſe does mind all of us to be real and ſincere in all our Religious exerciſes and pretences. This Hypocriſie is the worſt habit a Chriſtian can appear in at his final doom, before the Tribunal of the great and terrible God. There is no excuſe, no mercy for it. You may have read how *the Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth* a ſort of *violence, and the violent take it by force*; but you never heard that ever it is to be taken by craft. Deceit and guile may do a great deal here in this world; but in the world to come, and at the great and univerſal Bar of all mankind, every thing will then be unveiled and laid open. Whatſoever we think, or ſpeak, or do, eſpecially in matters of Religion, we ſhould alway remember that God hath a particular eye upon us, and that *the day of Revelation* is coming, *when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be diſcloſed*; when all diſguiſes ſhall be laid aſide, and every ones maſk ſhall be taken off, and all our actions ſhall be brought

upon the publick ſtage, and expoſed to the view of men Angels.

And how will the Phariſee and all his kinred then look, when the vizor of their counterfeit ſanctity ſhall be taken off? What confuſion of face will then riſe up in their countenance, yea what an horrible dread muſt there needs then overwhelm their ſpirits, when they ſhall find themſelvs ſo diſcovered and expoſed, when they ſhall be ſurrounded with an infinite company of ſuch glorious ſpectators, and no way left to ſhift or hide themſelvs any longer? *If judgment begin at the houſe of God, where then ſhall theſe ungodly-Godly-ſinners appear?* They are left to the deteſtation of God, and Angels, and Saints, to be a terrour to themſelvs, and to be inſulted on by the Devils to all eternity. Oh it will be a ſad time indeed for them, when they ſhall come in their laſt extremity, and ſupplicate from the very bottom of their ſouls, and *cry, Lord, Lord, and then the Lord will not know them*, but diſmiſs them with that deadful and cutting ſentence; *Go ye curſed into the lake of fire and brimſtone prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Wherefore, above all things, my brethren, let us hold the faith of Chriſt, and *let us have our Converſation here in this world in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity.*

And that we may avoid all ſuſpicion of Phariſaiſm, and the danger of exceſs in Religious pretences both to ourſelvs and others, our ſafe rule is to keep even with the known Laws and practice of the Church in public. In our Cloſets and in private we are a Law unto ourſelvs; our own reaſon is our Law. We may be as devout, and pour out ourſelvs by ourſelvs, as much as, and in what manner we think good. But when we are to be ſeen of men, we ſhould by no means affect a ſingularity in things of this nature: For whatever ſome men may eſteem it, it is a diſparagement to Religion. It ſeemeth not only inconſiſtent with the fundamental graces of the holy Spirit, ſuch as humility, meekneſs, modeſty, and the like; but it does directly oppoſe the expreſs will of our

Saviour

Saviour, the bleſſed Author of our Religion, which the greateſt care imaginable forbids us to reſemble the Phariſees in theſe concerns, or to give the leaſt countenance to the dangerous cheat of their Hypocriſie.

To this purpoſe, we ſhall do well to remember how earneſt our Saviour was to baniſh all oſtentation from Religion, all vanity and levity from the Altar: How gravely and ſharply he rebuked Phariſaiſm; what pains he hath taken to diſcover the whiles and the cheats of it; and how much he made it his buſineſs (if it were poſſible) to put it quite out of countenance, and all the world out of conceit with it; but eſpecially to prevent his own Scholars of being infected or enſnar'd by it.

Now it was a moſt obliging deſign of our Saviour in labouring thus to ſecure Religion from impoſture, to reſcue truth from the vulgar errours and the vain Traditions of men, and to fix ſuch legible and laſting characters upon theſe things, as if we will but follow his directions, we may chuſe whether ever we will cozen or be cozened by Phariſaiſm. Indeed he has taken every mans part in it; and it is a kindneſs done the whole world, to conſult their ſecurity from Religious impoſture.

It muſt needs therefore alſo in Conſcience highly concern us that are Miniſters of his Word to follow theſe ſteps, to purſue theſe candid endeavours of our moſt wiſe and holy Maſter, being of ſo great conſequence to the ſouls of men. We may eaſily ſee what it is he accounts moſt pernicious to the true Religion, namely the dark and myſterious repreſentation of things that are pretended neceſſary to ſalvation. This is the way of all ſorts of Juglers in the world, and the very life of all impoſture. We know alſo how apt people are to admire what they do not underſtand, and how fondly to be inflamed toward thoſe things that are repreſented only at half lights, and how that by theſe means the Deceivers raiſe in them almoſt whatſoever erroneous opinions they pleaſe. If

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ever therefore we will cure the distempers which these Mountebanks have wrought in the minds of weak men, and dissipate and purge out the ill humors, and rectify the misunderstandings which they have contracted in the world, or prevent the imposture of these spiritual jugglers for the future; it should seem that the way of our great Physician, the universal Saviour, is the way, *viz.* by rendring the matters of Religion as plain and accountable as we can, to the understandings of those with whom we have to do. It matters not if plainness of address in spiritual things be not so glorious and taking in the eyes of weak and vain men, since it is so highly esteemed in the sight of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. That which was a prime part of our Saviours Prophetic undertaking, must needs be ours also, whose most business is teaching and exhortation; to assert and vindicate truth according to the naked simplicity of the Gospel; to disperse those clouds and mists which Pharisaism hath raised about it; to illustrate it, and do our utmost to disabuse the harmless world; to explain the dark things of Religion that are necessary for men to know, and render them as obvious to the meanest capacities as may be; to make the way of salvation *an high-way, that wayfaring men though fools should not erre therein:* To represent all such things in Religion as gravely plain as is possible, is the way which our blessed Lord and Master hath chalked out unto us, for countermining and defeating Pharisaism. And let us all remember, it was not for nothing that our Saviour hath so strictly charged us, as *first of all*, (or *above all things*) *to beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees, which is Hypocrisie.*

*Keep we beseech thee, O Lord, thy Church with thy perpetual mercy; and because the frailty of man without thee cannot but fall, keep us ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

FINIS.